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Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects

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Report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations

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I. Introduction

1. The Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, in making its recommendations, reaffirms the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

2. In its resolution 54/81 B of 25 May 2000, the General Assembly welcomed the report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (A/54/839) and decided that the Committee would, in accordance with its mandate, continue its efforts for a comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects.

3. The Special Committee convened in an extraordinary session and decided to create an open-ended working group, chaired by Canada, to examine the recommendations of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (A/55/305-S/2000/809) in the light of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of those recommendations (A/55/502) and bearing in mind the recommendations of the report of the Special Committee and the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter. The Special Committee expressed its gratitude to Ambassador Lakhdar Brahimi, Chairman of the Panel, for briefing the Special Committee on issues related to the Panel's report.

4. The following proposals, recommendations and conclusions of the Special Committee are presented in accordance with the order and clustering of topics in annex III to the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations.

II. Proposals, recommendations and conclusions

A. Conflict prevention

5. The Special Committee notes the Secretary-General's intention to submit a report on conflict prevention to the General Assembly and the Security Council and is of the view that the report should be considered by the Assembly.

B. Peace-building strategy

6. The Special Committee supports exploration of the concept that a small percentage of a mission's first-year budget should be made available to the head of

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mission to fund quick-impact projects targeted at enhancing the mission's effectiveness in implementing its mandate in its area of operations. Should this concept be implemented, it should be done following due consultations with local authorities in an impartial and transparent manner. Details of the projects should be reflected in the relevant reports of the Secretary-General.

7. The Special Committee recommends that, when they are mandated by the Security Council as part of a peacekeeping operation, programmes for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration be provided with adequate and timely resources, and urges that consideration be given to bringing disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes into the assessed budgets of relevant peacekeeping operations for the start-up of an operation. The funding for such programmes would be reviewed in the course of the examination of the mission's budget.

C. Peacekeeping doctrine and strategy

8. The Special Committee believes that United Nations peacekeepers must be able to carry out their tasks professionally and successfully. Once deployed, they must be capable of accomplishing the mission's mandate and of defending themselves and, where mandated, other mission components. In this regard, the Special Committee underlines the importance of consultation with troop-contributing countries in the formulation of peacekeeping mandates and in the identification of tasks from the earliest stages of mission planning.

D. Clear, credible and achievable mandates

9. The Special Committee emphasizes the need for clear, credible and achievable mandates and the necessity for significantly strengthening and formalizing the consultation process between the Security Council and troop-contributing countries in order to make it more meaningful, with due regard to the relevant provisions of the Charter. Such consultations should be held in a timely manner, and may be held at the request of troop-contributing countries, in particular when the Secretary-General has identified potential troop-contributing countries for a new or ongoing peacekeeping operation and the Security Council is formulating the mandate. Consultations should also be held during the implementation phase of an operation, when considering a change in or renewal or completion of a peacekeeping mandate or when a rapid deterioration in the situation on the ground threatens the safety and security of United Nations peacekeepers. Such meetings should, as a general rule, be published in the *Journal of the United Nations*.

10. The Special Committee urges that the Security Council in its resolutions provide for the requirements related to deploying peacekeeping operations into potentially dangerous situations, especially the need for a clear chain of command and unity of effort, in accordance with the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects: command and control of United Nations peacekeeping operations" (A/49/681).

11. The Special Committee believes that the Secretariat must tell the Security Council what it needs to know, not what it wants to hear, when formulating or changing mission mandates. Countries that have committed military and civilian police units to an operation should be invited to participate in meetings of the Security Council in which the Secretariat provides it with information on changes to the mission's mandate and concept of operation that have implications for the mission's use of force. While authorizing the use of force, the Council should adhere to all relevant provisions of Chapter VII of the Charter.

12. On matters affecting the safety and security of personnel, countries that have committed personnel to an operation should be fully and regularly briefed by the Secretariat. The Special Committee urges that the Secretariat's briefings to troop-contributing countries be timely, comprehensive and professional, and should, as a general rule, be accompanied by written briefs.

E. Information and strategic analysis

13. Recognizing the informational and analytical requirements of the United Nations, mainly with respect to United Nations peacekeeping operations, the Special Committee is of the view that the Committee and other relevant bodies of the General Assembly

should continue to consider the United Nations needs in this regard and how best to use existing resources.

F. Transitional civil administration

14. While recognizing that transitional civil administrations in United Nations peacekeeping operations have been undertaken on an exceptional basis, the Special Committee notes the establishment of a working group to conduct a needs assessment as set out in relevant paragraphs of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (A/55/502) and requests that it consult in a timely manner with Member States before finalizing its report. The Special Committee is of the view that the Secretary-General should prepare a more detailed plan of action, as mentioned in paragraph 35 of the report of the Secretary-General, only if the General Assembly has indicated its interest.

G. Determining deployment timelines

15. The Special Committee urges the Secretariat to work towards the goal of being able to deploy peacekeeping operations within 30 days after the adoption of a United Nations mandate and to deploy complex peacekeeping operations within 90 days after the adoption of a mandate. The Special Committee stresses that these time frames require political will and more effective operational capabilities, including an efficient United Nations standby arrangements system, as well as their successful implementation.

16. The Special Committee acknowledges the Secretary-General's intention to use the proposed time frames as the basis for evaluating the capacity of the existing system to provide field missions with the human, material, financial and informational assets that they require.

H. Mission leadership

17. The Special Committee welcomes actions taken by the Secretary-General to improve the selection of mission leaders and emphasizes that prior to being selected, all mission leaders must be interviewed by the senior leadership, as a general rule, at United Nations Headquarters. Due regard should be given to contributions by countries providing troops and civilian police to that mission, to the principle of recruiting staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible and to gender balance. The expenses of candidates called for interviews should as a matter of principle be borne by the United Nations, and all concerned permanent missions should be informed of the outcome of the selection process in a timely manner.

18. The Special Committee stresses the importance of the entire leadership of a mission being assembled at United Nations Headquarters as early as possible in order to enable them to participate in key aspects of the mission-planning process. The Committee further stresses the importance of the Secretariat's providing comprehensive and continuous operational and strategic guidance to the mission leadership.

I. Military personnel

19. The Special Committee recognizes the need for Member States and the Secretariat to work together to update and enhance the United Nations standby arrangements and, in particular, stresses the importance of including a strategic transport capability.

20. The Special Committee endorses the concept that authority should be vested in the Secretary-General to formally canvass Member States participating in the United Nations standby arrangements regarding their willingness to contribute troops to a potential operation once it appears likely that the United Nations might have an implementing role in ceasefire or peace agreements and will undertake a peacekeeping operation.

21. The Special Committee urges that, as a standard practice, an assessment team from the Secretariat be sent to confirm the preparedness of each potential troop contributor and stresses that such assessments should be administered impartially, without geographic bias. Such assessments could lead, where appropriate, to assistance rendered to help the troop-contributing countries to meet the requisite standards.

22. The Special Committee stresses the need to strengthen the United Nations standby arrangement system in terms of military officers. The Committee takes note of the Secretary-General's intention to communicate to Member States his requirements for on-call lists of military officers by February 2001 after fully consulting all Member States on how best to

develop a workable system. The Special Committee looks forward to further considering this matter at its next regular session.

J. Civilian police personnel

23. The Special Committee recognizes the need to strengthen civilian police standby capacity and encourages further consultation with Member States, especially with contributing countries, on ways and means to enhance the national pools of civilian police in the context of the standby arrangements.

24. The Special Committee encourages efforts to improve the training of civilian police.

25. The Special Committee looks forward to finalizing, as requested, the principles and guidelines for United Nations civilian police operations after the completion of consultations with Member States.

26. The Special Committee welcomes the Secretary-General's clarification that the permanent missions to the United Nations will continue to serve as the Secretariat's point of contact with Member States for the provision of civilian police.

27. The Special Committee stresses the need to strengthen the standby arrangement system in terms of civilian police officers. The Special Committee takes note of the Secretary-General's intention to communicate to Member States his requirements for on-call lists of civilian police officers by February 2001 after fully consulting all Member States on how best to develop a workable system. The Special Committee looks forward to further considering this matter at its next regular session.

K. Civilian specialists

28. The Special Committee supports the establishment by the Secretariat of a roster of pre-selected civilian candidates available for deployment to peacekeeping operations on the basis that such candidates are not gratis personnel, which are prohibited in General Assembly resolution 51/243, and that they are pledged through the standby arrangements. The Committee also stresses that, in addition to the Internet and Intranet, recruitment to the roster should be accomplished through other channels of communication with universal access.

29. The Special Committee looks forward to the Secretary-General's review of the effectiveness of delegating recruitment authority to the field, including guidelines required to ensure equitable geographical distribution and gender balance.

30. The Special Committee encourages the reform of the Field Service category of personnel and a review of the working conditions of externally recruited staff, welcomes the recommendation of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to formulate a comprehensive staffing strategy for peacekeeping operations and, in this context, stresses the need to maintain equitable geographic distribution and gender balance in all of these cases. The Committee looks forward to further consultations between the Secretariat and all members of the Committee on these matters.

L. Rapidly deployable capability for public information

31. The Special Committee recognizes the importance of an enhanced rapidly deployable public information capability that must be impartial, accurate and objective. Consideration must be given to the promotion of local capacity.

32. The Special Committee recognizes that additional resources should be devoted in mission budgets to public information and the associated personnel and information technology required to get an operation's message out and to build effective internal communication links.

M. Logistics support and expenditure management

33. The Special Committee urges that any delegation of procurement authority to the field include appropriate regulations to ensure propriety, accountability and transparency and that appropriate resources be made available to mission leadership for the same purpose.

N. Funding Headquarters support for peacekeeping operations

34. The Special Committee reiterates its request for an expeditious and comprehensive review of the

management, structure, recruitment processes and interrelationships of all relevant elements within the Secretariat that play a role in peacekeeping operations. The comprehensive review will be essential for the thorough consideration of the resource requirements of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and other departments involved in backstopping United Nations peacekeeping operations.

35. Pending this review, the Special Committee believes that some additional resources should be made available on an emergency basis for the staffing of the Department's Military and Civilian Planning Division, including, in particular, the number of military mission officers, the Military Planning Service, the Training Unit, specifically to support peacekeeping training activities in Member States in order to meet operational requirements, the Civilian Police Unit, the Office of Operations, the Claims and Information Management Section and other sections of the Field Administration and Logistics Division, where appropriate.

36. In making this recommendation, the Special Committee reaffirms Articles 100 and 101 of the Charter. The Special Committee reiterates its recommendation that active service military and civilian police officers should be adequately represented in all future staffing actions undertaken by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to reflect the important contributions these officers can make to peacekeeping operations at the Headquarters level. The Special Committee believes that troop-contributing countries should be properly represented in the Department, reflecting their contribution to United Nations peacekeeping.

37. The Special Committee stresses that the increase in the number of staff in the Department, once approved by the relevant bodies of the General Assembly, should be carried out in an open and transparent manner. In this regard, it requests the Secretary-General to submit a report to be considered by the relevant bodies of the Assembly.

38. The Special Committee further notes that the efficiency of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations is, apart from staffing, closely related to internal reform and planned restructuring, open and transparent practices, accountable procedures and the effective utilization of available resources.

O. Integrated mission planning and support

39. The Special Committee recognizes the importance of coordinating mechanisms in responding to complex challenges to peace and security, and is encouraged by the proposed creation where appropriate of integrated mission task forces. The individual entities participating in the task forces would continue to be guided by their respective mandates, be responsible to their governing bodies and should participate in the task forces without detriment to their core functions.

P. Other structural adjustments in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations

40. Pending the comprehensive review, the Special Committee recognizes the need to restructure the Military and Civilian Planning Division, including separating the Civilian Police Unit from the Division.

41. The Special Committee also recognizes the importance of ensuring that a gender perspective is incorporated into all aspects of peacekeeping operations.

42. The Special Committee stresses the need for a properly functioning lessons learned unit within the Department that would ensure that experiences from past and ongoing peacekeeping operations would be better incorporated into peacekeeping policy and planning than has been the case to date.

43. The Special Committee stresses that the Policy Analysis and Lesson Learned Unit should be provided with reliable funding, primarily through assessed contributions under the Support Account, in order to allow it to meet more effectively the priorities set by the Committee. This capacity would enable it to develop guidelines and standard operating procedures, as well as the sharing of best practices among missions.

44. The Special Committee is of the view that the Training Unit should continue to focus its core tasks on assisting the training activities of Member States and, in collaboration with the Policy Analysis and Lessons Learned Unit, it should develop guidelines and standard operational procedures.

45. The Special Committee requests the Secretariat to provide clarification at its next regular session about its intention to develop a "military doctrine", a term which is open to several interpretations, thus causing concern to the Special Committee.

Q. Operational support for public information

46. The Special Committee once again recognizes the important contribution that public information can make towards attainment of mission mandates, and in this context calls for strengthening of the planning and support of public information in peacekeeping operations, bearing in mind the need to provide comprehensive and objective information while maintaining independence, impartiality, accuracy and full consistency with the resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly.

47. The Special Committee reiterates the role such a capacity can play in enhancing personnel safety and security in United Nations peacekeeping operations. The Committee welcomes the Secretariat's efforts to address public information requirements in the planning process as well as in the start-up phase of peacekeeping operations, strongly supports close cooperation between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Public Information in such efforts and encourages further enhancement of this cooperation.

R. Peacekeeping operations and the information age

48. The Special Committee takes note of efforts that are under way to review information management issues and information technology needs, both at Headquarters and in the field, and the creation of a working group towards this end.

S. Other

49. The delay in reimbursement of troop contributors remains a deep concern for the Special Committee; such delays cause hardship to all troop- and equipment-contributing countries, especially developing countries. The Committee encourages the Secretariat to continue to expedite the processing of all claims and asks the Secretary-General to present a progress report in this regard by the next session of the Committee.

50. The Special Committee stresses that all Member States must pay their assessed contributions in full, on time and without conditions, and it reaffirms the obligation of Member States under Article 17 of the Charter to bear the expenses of the Organization as apportioned by the General Assembly, bearing in mind the special responsibility of permanent members of the Security Council, as indicated in Assembly resolution 1874 (S-IV) of 27 June 1963.

51. The Special Committee strongly underlines the need to explore the possibilities for improving the safety and security of United Nations and associated personnel working in United Nations peacekeeping operations.

52. The Special Committee will resume its consideration of the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations and its implementation plan at its forthcoming regular session, to be held after the completion and submission of the comprehensive review. It requests the Secretary-General to report on the implementation of the recommendations contained in this report in his report to the Committee at that time.